W.i.t.c.h
8
P75
February-March 2003
Will Irma Taranee Cornelia Hay Lin
Quiz: Who is your ideal boyfriend?
Inside a guy's head
Blazing hot must-haves!
THE BLACK ROSES OF MERIDIAN

HEATHERFIELD
DESPITE THE COLD AND SNOW THAT COVER THE AREA NOW, IN JUST A FEW DAYS, THIS WILL BE ONE OF THE HOTTEST SPOTS IN THE CITY.
AND THE REASON BEHIND THIS SUDDEN RISE IN TEMPERATURE? KARMILLA AND HER BAND—AND UNLESS YOU ARE FROM ANOTHER PLANET . . .
SUNDAY
from 4 p.m.
till
POP & ROCK
KARMILLA
. . . YOU'VE HEARD OF HER!
I SAID NO! PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME. . . .

. . . JUST WAIT ONE SECOND. I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING AS SOON AS CLASS IS OVER!
BUT THIS IS TORTURE! YOU SAID YOU HAVE A SURPRISE AND NOW YOU WON'T TELL US—THAT'S JUST CRUEL!
OH, ALL RIGHT. I WOULDN'T WANT TO MAKE YOU SUFFER. THE KARMILLA CONCERT IS THIS SUNDAY! I KNOW THE SHOW HAS BEEN SOLD OUT FOR A LONG TIME . . .
. . . BUT THANKS TO A CERTAIN SPECIAL PERSON'S AMAZING FATHER, WE'VE GOT TICKETS!
WOW! CORNELIA'S DAD MUST HAVE SOME GREAT CONNECTIONS.
HA-HA! VERY FUNNY, TARANEE! IT WILL BE A SHAME TO LEAVE YOU AT HOME!
WHAT? CAN'T YOU TAKE A JOKE?
WHATEVER! THE POINT IS, MY DAD IS IN CHARGE OF SECURITY FOR THE CONCERT, AND HE HAS PROMISED TO FIND US A WAY BACKSTAGE!
GREAT! SO THAT MEANS . . .
. . . IT MEANS . . . YOU YOUNG LADIES ARE TALKING TOO MUCH AND DRAWING TOO LITTLE!

YOUR TABLE SEEMS TO BE MAKING A LOT OF NOISE, YOUNG LADIES! WHY DON'T YOU TRY KEEPING YOUR MOUTHS CLOSED WHILE YOU WORK?
SURE! GOT IT! NO PROBLEM!
YOUR WATERCOLOR IS STUNNING, HAY LIN! YOU HAVE A GOOD BRUSH TECHNIQUE AND A GOOD EYE FOR COLOR.
AND THE LIKENESS IS EXCELLENT! YOU'RE REALLY QUITE TALENTED!
THANK YOU, MRS. WHARTON!
HERE, ON THE OTHER HAND, I CAN'T REALLY SAY THE SAME THING! WHY DON'T TRY APPLYING YOURSELF A LITTLE MORE, IRMA?
DUH-OH . . .
OOOF! THIS IS RIDICULOUS. I HATE PAINTING! IS IT MY FAULT IF I'M NOT AS AMAZING AS SOME PEOPLE?
YOU COULD PROBABLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT . . .

AFTER ALL, WE'RE WORKING WITH WATERCOLORS, AND SINCE YOU DO CONTROL THE POWER OF WATER . . . IT SHOULDN'T BE TOO DIFFICULT FOR YOU!
GOOD POINT, TARANEE!
I THINK THAT IS CALLED CHEATING!
OH, LIGHTEN UP! THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH WANTING A GOOD GRADE IN DRAWING. JUST THINK HOW IMPRESSED MRS. WHARTON WILL BE!
HERE WE GO . . . IT'S WORKING . . . IT'S REALLY WORKING!
DRIIIIIN
SCHOOL IS OVER FOR THE DAY.
BESIDES STUDYING? NOT MUCH! I MIGHT GO WITH MY MOM TO LOOK FOR A NEW PAIR OF SKATES! I'M A LITTLE BEHIND WITH MY TRAINING, AND IT WOULD BE A GOOD EXCUSE TO START AGAIN.
SO WHAT ARE YOU UP TO THIS AFTERNOON?
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
STUDYING, STUDYING, AND MORE STUDYING.

IF I COULD JUST TELEPATHICALLY KNOW THE ANSWERS ON THE TESTS, LIKE IRMA, EVERYTHING WOULD BE SO MUCH SIMPLER!
I DON'T! NOT EVEN A LITTLE . . .
SOMETIMES I ENVY HER!
. . . AND I REALLY DON'T RIGHT NOW!
OH, MY GOSH! WHAT HAPPENED?
HOLD ON, YOU GUYS! DON'T BE LIKE THIS! THE SITUATION GOT A LITTLE OUT OF CONTROL. BUT EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES!
AND YOU! DON'T SAY A WORD!
WHAT? I HAVEN'T SAID ANYTHING.
YOU DIDN'T SAY IT, BUT YOU PROBABLY THOUGHT IT.
ACTUALLY . . . SHE DID THINK IT.
AAAGH! TARANEE—GET OUT OF MY HEAD!
UM . . . COULD SOMEONE FILL ME IN ON WHAT HAPPENED?
THE "ARTIST" HERE WANTED TO PLAY WITH PAINT, AND AS A RESULT—WE LOOK LIKE THIS!
I WAS GOING TO WEAR THIS ON SUNDAY—BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THAT WON'T BE HAPPENING!
SPEAKING OF THE CONCERT, IS THERE ANY NEWS?
THE FATHER OF OUR CRAZY PAINTER IS TAKING CARE OF SECURITY AT THE STADIUM! WE'LL SEE THE CONCERT FROM BACKSTAGE!
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S REASON ENOUGH TO FORGIVE HER?

GOOD! NOW WE'RE FRIENDS AGAIN.
I HOPE MY MOM LETS ME GO TO THE CONCERT. COBALT BLUE, MATT'S GROUP, WILL BE PLAYING, AND I DON'T WANT TO MISS THEM!
HHHMMM . . .
CORNELIA? IS SOMETHING WRONG? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?
ELYON!
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I REALLY MISS HER!
NOT AGAIN! DON'T START! WE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT THIS!
NOT ENOUGH! I THINK WE NEED TO GIVE HER ANOTHER CHANCE!

REMEMBER WHAT SHE DID TO TARANEE? ALL THOSE TRAPS SHE SET FOR US. SHE IS THE ENEMY NOW, CORNELIA! YOU CAN'T FORGET THAT . . .
BUT SHE WAS MY BEST FRIEND! SHE HELPED ME WHEN I WAS IN MERIDIAN. YOU DON'T KNOW HER LIKE I DO.
WELL, I'M GOING THIS WAY . . .
I'LL COME WITH YOU.
WE'RE NEVER GOING TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM THIS WAY—WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT IT!
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT IT, WILL?
IT'S HARD TO SAY, CORNELIA. BUT FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN . . .
I'M POSITIVE THAT ELYON GOT CAUGHT UP IN SOMETHING BEYOND HER CONTROL—MAYBE SHE JUST NEEDS OUR HELP!
IT'S NOT THE SAME THING, AND YOU KNOW IT . . .
WHY CAN'T WE GIVE HER THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT AND FORGIVE HER? YOU JUST FORGAVE IRMA!
CAN YOU JUST PROMISE TO THINK ABOUT IT?
I PROMISE! SEE YOU LATER, CORNELIA!
WILL!
69

HI, MOM!
I'M GLAD YOU'RE HOME! COULD YOU GIVE ME A HAND WITH THESE SHOPPING BAGS? THEY WEIGH A TON!

HUFF . . . WHAT'S WITH ALL THESE GROCERIES?
THEY'RE FOR THIS SUNDAY! I WANT THE PARTY TO BE PERFECT!

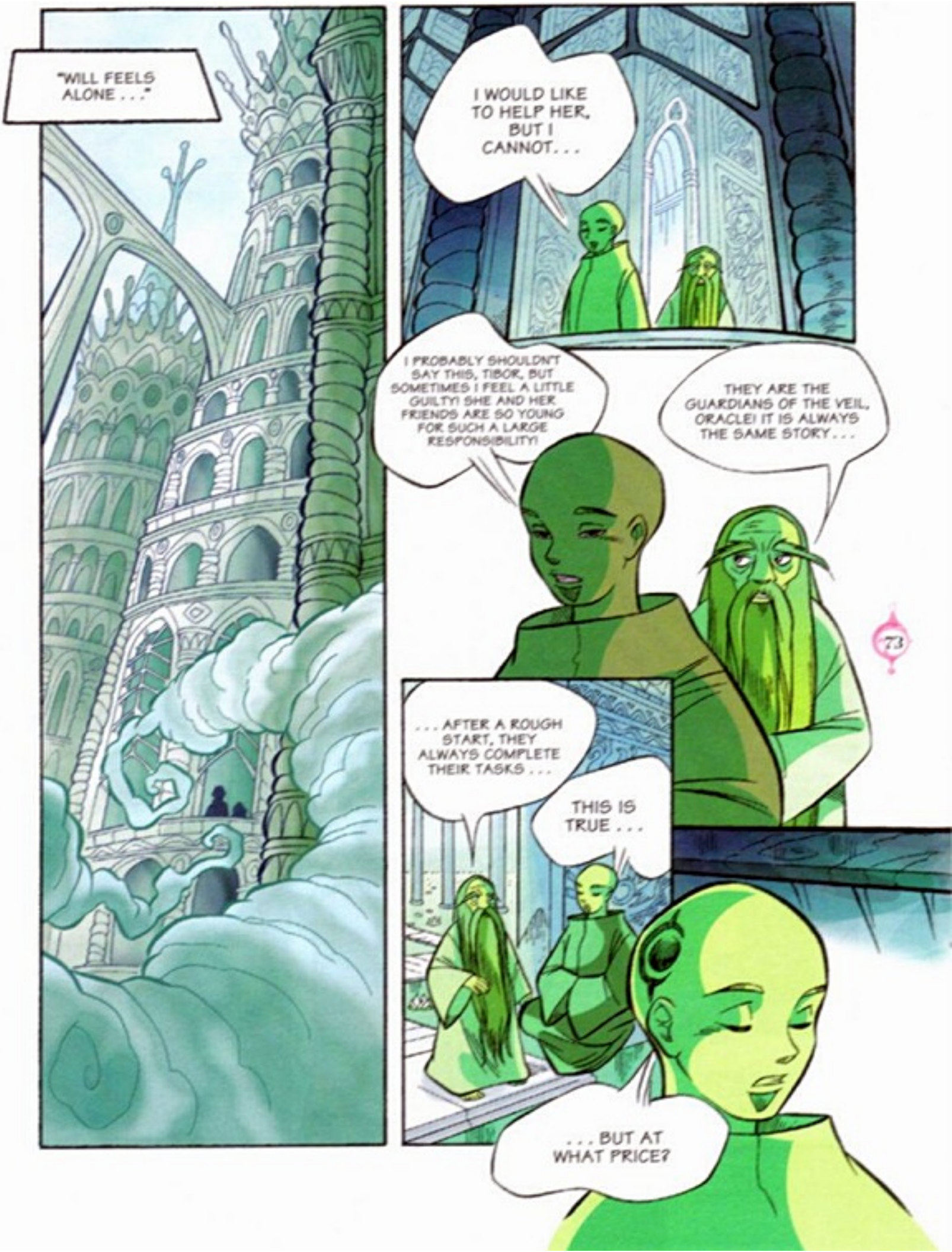
THE . . . PARTY?
DON'T TELL ME YOU FORGOT? IT'S MY BIRTHDAY!

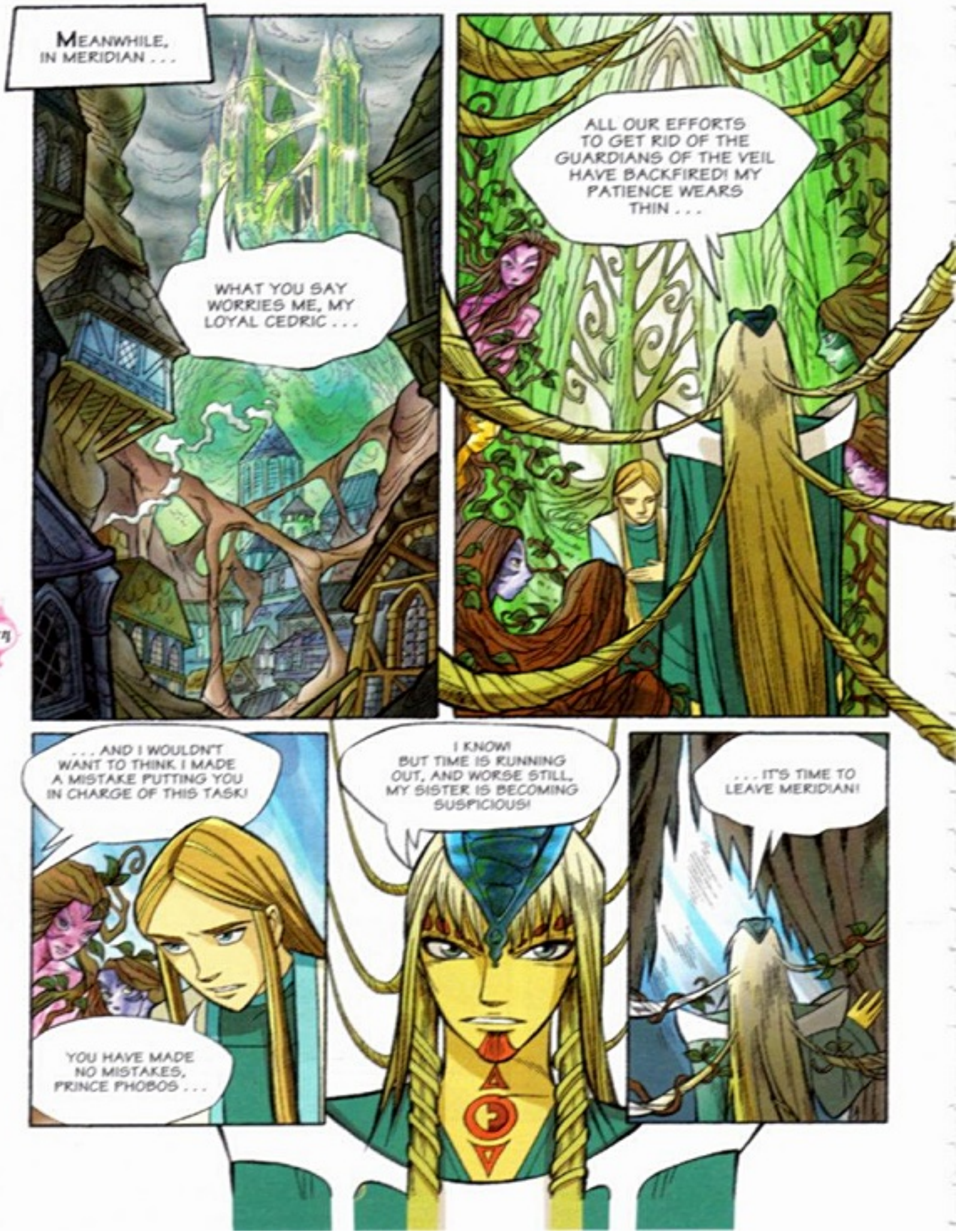
OF COURSE I DIDN'T FORGET! IT'S . . . IT'S JUST THAT I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE HAVING A PARTY . . .
IT'S A PRIVATE LUNCH PARTY, ACTUALLY, JUST FOR THE TWO OF US! ISN'T THAT GREAT?

AND THEN, AFTERWARDS, WE'LL TAKE A TRIP TO ROSEVILLE! ITS BEEN SO LONG SINCE WE DID ANYTHING FUN LIKE THAT!
IT'S A FANTASTIC IDEA, MOM! THERE'S JUST ONE LITTLE PROBLEM . . .

I CAN'T DO IT THIS SUNDAY! THERE'S A CONCERT IN TOWN, AND THE GIRLS AND I ARE GOING! IRMA'S DAD IS TAKING US . . .
I HAD REALLY HOPED TO SPEND THE DAY WITH YOU.
WE CAN ALWAYS GO TO ROSEVILLE NEXT WEEKEND . . .
NEXT WEEKEND IT WON'T BE MY BIRTHDAY ANYMORE! I'M SORRY, WILL . . .
. . . BUT WE NEVER SEE EACH OTHER ANYMORE. YOU SPEND ALL YOUR TIME ALONE OR WITH YOUR FRIENDS!
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO? IT'S NOT MY FAULT YOU'RE NEVER HERE!
I HAVE TO WORK, WILL! YOU ALWAYS SEEM TO FORGET THAT!
I KNOW! BUT YOU ALWAYS MANAGE TO FIND TIME FOR MR. COLLINS, DON'T YOU?
DON'T USE THAT TONE OF VOICE WITH ME! KEEP IT UP AND THIS SUNDAY'S PLANS ARE GOING TO LOOK A LOT DIFFERENT . . .
. . . YOU WON'T BE GOING TO THE CONCERT, AND I WON'T BE GIVING ANY BIRTHDAY PARTY! WE'LL BOTH STAY AT HOME LIKE TWO FOOLS. NOW, THIS CONVERSATION IS OVER!

SLAM
GNIK!


"WILL FEELS ALONE . . ."
I WOULD LIKE TO HELP HER, BUT I CANNOT . . .
I PROBABLY SHOULDN'T SAY THIS, TIBOR, BUT SOMETIMES I FEEL A LITTLE GUILTY! SHE AND HER FRIENDS ARE SO YOUNG FOR SUCH A LARGE RESPONSIBILITY!
THEY ARE THE GUARDIANS OF THE VEIL, ORACLE! IT IS ALWAYS THE SAME STORY . . .
73
. . . AFTER A ROUGH START, THEY ALWAYS COMPLETE THEIR TASKS . . .
THIS IS TRUE . . .
. . . BUT AT WHAT PRICE?


MEANWHILE, IN MERIDIAN . . .
WHAT YOU SAY WORRIES ME, MY LOYAL CEDRIC . . .
ALL OUR EFFORTS TO GET RID OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE VEIL HAVE BACKFIRED! MY PATIENCE WEARS THIN . . .
. . . AND I WOULDN'T WANT TO THINK I MADE A MISTAKE PUTTING YOU IN CHARGE OF THIS TASK!
YOU HAVE MADE NO MISTAKES, PRINCE PHOBOS . . .
I KNOW! BUT TIME IS RUNNING OUT, AND WORSE STILL, MY SISTER IS BECOMING SUSPICIOUS!
. . . IT'S TIME TO LEAVE MERIDIAN!

SEE, CEDRIC . . . MERIDIAN IS BREAKING DOWN! I'VE ABSORBED ALL ITS ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES . . .
. . . THE PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO FADE UNDER THE STRAIN OF POVERTY AND OTHER DIFFICULTIES . . .
. . . IT'S NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO TRY TO CALM THEIR FRUSTRATIONS . . . WHICH IS WHY MY PLAN IS SO PERFECT!
YOU WILL STOKE THE FIRE OF THE PEOPLE'S ANGER! I WANT THEIR HATE AND THEIR DESPERATION TO GROW . . .
BUT . . . WHY?
. . . WHEN THEY HATE ME ENOUGH, THEY WILL DO ANYTHING TO ESCAPE FROM MY RULE. THEN YOU WILL SEND THEM THROUGH THE VEIL, FORCING THEM THROUGH A NEW PORTAL!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND . . .

THE VEIL IS THE ONLY OBSTACLE IN THE WAY OF FREEDOM . . . MY FREEDOM! A MASSIVE ATTACK WILL CAUSE IT TO FALL APART. ITS STRUCTURE HAS BECOME WEAK WITH AGE . . .
. . . THE FORCE OF ALL THE PEOPLE WILL DESTROY IT! IT'S NO USE WASTING OUR TIME FIGHTING AGAINST THE GUARDIANS OF THE VEIL.
THE CONSEQUENCES OF MASSIVE MOVEMENT THROUGH THE VEIL WILL BE CATASTROPHIC FOR EARTH . . .
SO, MY DEAR CEDRIC . . . DO NOT FAIL ME THIS TIME!
76

BACK IN HEATHERFIELD, SUNDAY HAS FINALLY ARRIVED. CERTAIN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN WAITING ALL WEEK FOR THIS DAY . . .
. . . BUT GREAT EXPECTATIONS CAN SOMETIMES BRING GREAT DISAPPOINTMENTS, TOO!
BELIEVE ME, IRMA! I'M SORRIER THAN YOU! IT'S JUST A MILD CASE OF THE FLU, BUT I'D RATHER BE SAFE THAN SORRY! I'LL BE THERE FOR THE NEXT CONCERT, OKAY?
FIRST WILL, AND NOW YOU! WHAT'S UP WITH YOU GUYS? THIS WAS GOING TO BE THE BEST DAY EVER! WHO KNOWS WHEN WE'LL GET ANOTHER CHANCE LIKE THIS?
LET'S GO, IRMA! WE'RE GOING TO BE LATE!
WELL, YOUR LOSS, HAY LIN. AND EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T DESERVE IT, I'LL PICK YOU UP SOME AUTOGRAPHS. HOPE YOU FEEL BETTER!
I DON'T LIKE LYING TO MY FRIENDS . . . BUT IF I TOLD THEM THE TRUTH THEY WOULD HAVE MADE FUN OF ME FOREVER!
TLIC
SKIPPING OUT ON A CONCERT TO HELP YOUR PARENTS OUT AT THE RESTAURANT IS NOT THE COOLEST THING TO DO . . .
TUMP
TUMP
TUMP

. . . BUT UNTIL MOM STARTS FEELING BETTER, IT'S WHAT I'VE GOT TO DO.
AH-CHOO!
DON'T GET TOO CLOSE, HAY DIN . . . SNIFF . . . I THINK I'M A LIDDLE INFECTIOUS!
ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO BACK DOWNSTAIRS! IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, CALL ME!
. . . ALTHOUGH SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT THE ONE WHO REALLY NEEDS ME IS MY FATHER!
I THINK I MIGHT BE A LITTLE CONFUSED—DID YOU ORDER THE FRIED ICE CREAM?
ACTUALLY, WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THE FRIED SPRING ROLLS FOR HALF AN HOUR . . . BUT AT THIS POINT, THE FRIED ICE CREAM WOULD BE FINE!
PRIVATE
AARGH! WHOSE ORDER OF RICE IS THIS? AND MAKE SURE YOU KEEP THAT SOUP WARM!
HERE . . . LET ME HELP WITH THAT, FANG!
HAY LIN! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? RING UP THE BILL FOR TABLE FIVE AND THEN TAKE THE ORDERS FOR TABLES EIGHT, TEN, AND TWELVE! HURRY!
WHEW! I'VE ONLY BEEN BACK ON THE JOB FOR THREE SECONDS, AND ALREADY I WANT TO TAKE A BREAK!
KITCHEN
THE SILVER DRAGON
I BET IRMA, CORNELIA, AND TARANEE ARE HAVING MORE FUN THAN I AM!

FUTUREDOME, THE COVERED STADIUM IN HEATHERFIELD
OVER HERE, GIRLS! OKAY . . . STAY PUT AND TRY NOT TO CAUSE ANY TROUBLE!
NO ENTR
WE CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH, MR. LAIR!
MY PLEASURE, GIRLS. ENJOY THE SHOW!
WE ALREADY ARE!
OVER THERE! LOOK!
DANNY! DANNY! DAAAAAANNY!
79
WH—WHAT IS WRONG WITH ALL OF YOU?
DID YOU SEE HIM? THAT WAS DANNY DOLL! THE BASS PLAYER OF KARMILLA! AND IF HE'S HERE . . .
. . . KARMILLA HAS TO BE CLOSE BY!
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT, SIR? DO YOU WANT ME TO ARREST THESE DELINQUENTS?
NO NEED FOR THAT, SPUD—THIS IS MY DAUGHTER, AND THESE ARE HER BEST FRIENDS . . .

OKAY . . . TRY NOT TO MAKE ME LOOK BAD! YOU'RE HERE TO SEE THE SHOW, NOT STAGE ONE!
YES, MR. LAIR!
LOOK! THERE'S MATT!
FORGET WHAT I JUST SAID! IF YOU WANT TO PUT THEM IN JAIL, GO FOR IT! I WOULDN'T BLAME YOU!
HE MUST BE SO NERVOUS! HE DIDN'T EVEN SEE US!
EXIT
OPENING FOR KARMILLA IS HUGE!
GIVE ME THE CAMERA! I WANT TO TAKE A PICTURE OF HIM FOR WILL!
OUFF!
HA! I CAN JUST IMAGINE HER FACE WHEN SHE SEES THIS . . .
FLASH

WHAT . . . NO CANDLES?
NO CANDLES. HERE'S YOUR SLICE . . .
IF YOU DON'T WANT IT NOW, YOU CAN HAVE IT LATER!
I WON'T WANT IT LATER, EITHER. I'M NOT HUNGRY.
WILL . . .
COME HERE, DORMOUSE! LET'S GO FOR A WALK . . .
SAY SOMETHING, SUSAN! DON'T LET HER GO OFF ANGRY! STOP HER!
THAT WAS GREAT, SUSAN. REAL GREAT.
SLAM

IT'S A SAD SUNDAY . . .

. . . WHEN I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO MONDAY! THAT'S PROBABLY THE FIRST TIME THAT'S HAPPENED TO ME SINCE WE MOVED TO HEATHERFIELD!

I HOPE HAY LIN IS ENJOYING HERSELF! AT LEAST SHE DECIDED NOT TO GO TO THE CONCERT . . . SOMEBODY ELSE MADE MY DECISION FOR ME!
BEEEP BIP BEEP BEEP BIP

HAY LIN! PHONE CALL FOR YOU!
I'LL TAKE IT UPSTAIRS!

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN HANDLE THIS ALL BY YOURSELF? IT'S EASY! JUST WRITE DOWN THE ORDER AND GIVE IT TO THE COOK! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

WILL! HOW ARE YOU? DID YOU AND YOUR MOM MAKE UP? HUH?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I'M TALKING ABOUT THE FACT THAT WE ARE STILL FIGHTING! IT'S DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN! NOTHING IS WRONG, SPECIFICALLY. . . I JUST DON'T WANT TO MAKE UP WITH HER QUITE YET. . .
. . . PLEASE, HAY LIN! DON'T YOU YELL AT ME, TOO! YOU'RE MY FRIEND—YOU SHOULD BE CHEERING ME UP!
OKAY, OKAY! I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING FUNNY. THEN! LISTEN . . .
UH-OH . . .
WILL! THE MAP OF THE TWELVE PORTALS IS FLASHING!
THAT'S NOT EVEN FUNNY, HAY LIN . . .
I'M NOT JOKING! IT'S AN EMERGENCY!

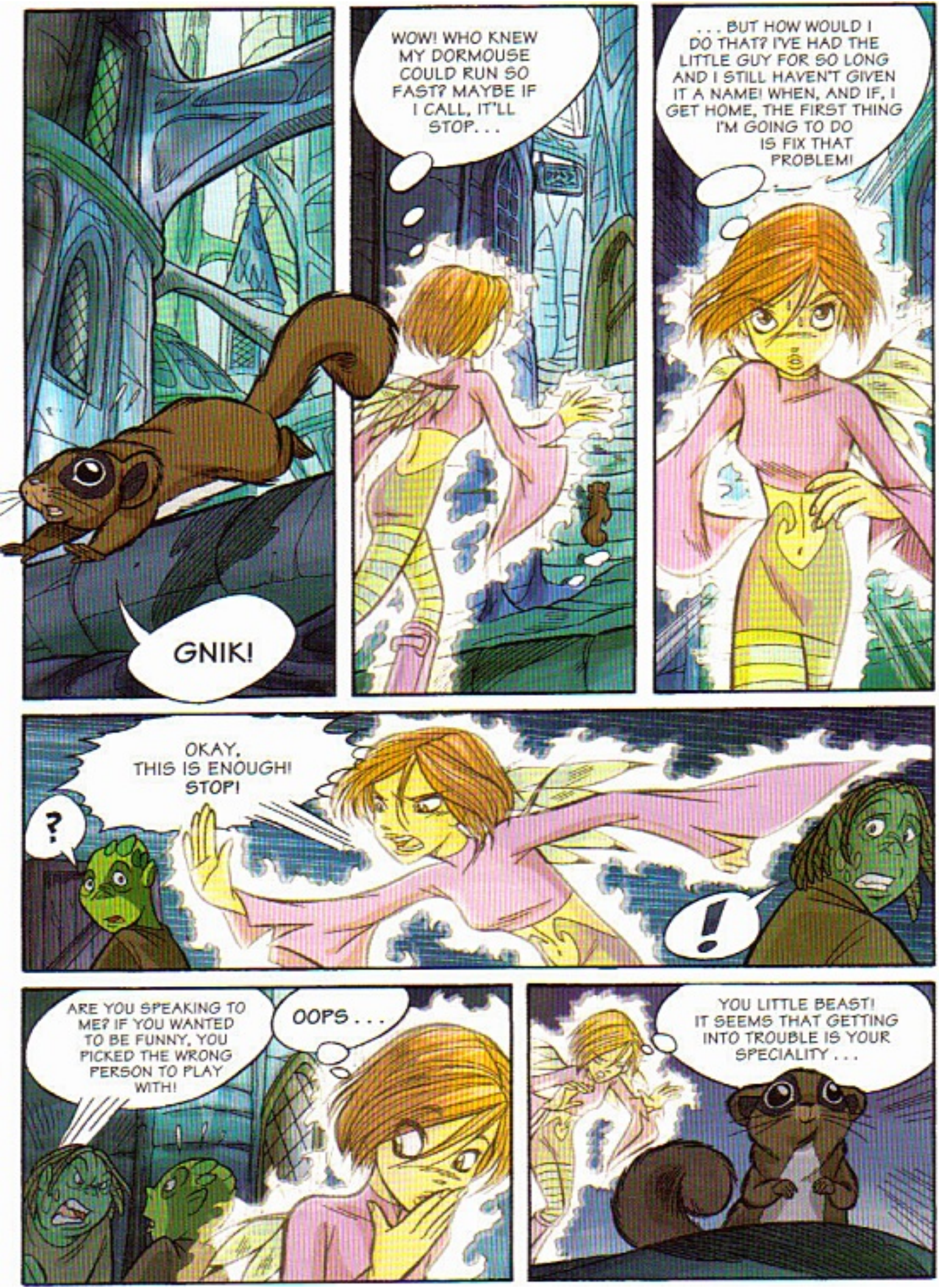
"A PORTAL OPENED UP SOMEWHERE INSIDE THE STADIUM!"
SO, I GUESS I'M GOING TO THE STADIUM AFTER ALL. MOM'S NOT GOING TO BE HAPPY IF SHE FINDS OUT. I'LL HAVE TO GET HOME BEFORE SHE REALIZES . . .
HOPEFULLY HAY LIN WILL BE ABLE TO COME AND HELP ME, SINCE I HAVE NO CLUE WHERE THE OTHER GIRLS ARE. I GUESS FOR NOW, I'VE GOT TO DO THIS BY MYSELF!
FIRST, I HAVE TO FIGURE OUT A WAY INSIDE—WITHOUT A TICKET. I DOUBT THESE TWO GOONS WILL LET ME JUST WALTZ RIGHT IN . . .
. . . BUT MAYBE THE HEART OF CANDRACAR CAN HELP! CLOSE YOUR EYES, DORMOUSE!
DON'T MAKE THAT FACE, DORMOUSE! IT'S STILL ME.
EERK!

NOW, HEART OF CANDRACAR . . . MAKE US INVISIBLE!
IT ACTUALLY WORKED! IT'S ALMOST LIKE A FORCE FIELD . . . THIS IS AMAZING!
ZAP
. . . IT'S PROBABLY BETTER TO STAY INSIDE, DORMOUSE! I'M PRETTY SURE IT WOULD SCARE SOMEONE TO SEE YOUR NOSE APPEAR OUT OF THIN AIR!
KNIF
KNIF
KNIF
HMMM, WHERE DO I START? THERE'S NO WAY A PORTAL COULD HAVE OPENED UP UNNOTICED . . . WHICH MEANS THAT THE NEWEST OPENING MUST BE SOMEWHERE OUT OF THE WAY—HIDDEN.
UH-OH . . . I'M GETTING THAT WEIRD FEELING AGAIN! I MUST BE CLOSE . . .
THE BASEMENT OF THE STADIUM MIGHT BE JUST THE PLACE . . . PLUS, MY SIXTH SENSE IS TELLING ME TO GO DOWN THERE, SO . . .
DAN

. . . VERY CLOSE.
DON'T BE AFRAID! FREEDOM IS CLOSE AT HAND!
WHAT? DON'T YOU TRUST ME?
IT'S NOT THAT, RAVEN! YOUR OFFER IS TEMPTING . . . BUT CROSSING THE THRESHOLD RIGHT NOW COULD BE A HUGE MISTAKE!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? DO YOU PREFER TO STAY IN MERIDIAN? DO YOU WANT TO BE MISERABLE AND HUNGRY? IF THAT'S THE CASE . . . I'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE.
NO! NO! THAT'S NOT IT . . . IT'S JUST . . . CALEB . . .
CALEB! CALEB! DON'T EVEN SPEAK HIS NAME! CALEB IS ALL TALK AND NO ACTION . . . I'M OFFERING YOU A WAY OF ESCAPE!

CALEB IS ONE OF US!
BUT I'M MORE POWERFUL THAN HE IS! I CAN OPEN AN OLD PASSAGEWAY IN THE VEIL WITH MY MAGIC. I'VE ALREADY DONE IT IN OTHER AREAS OF MERIDIAN . . .
. . . AND NOW I'VE COME TO HELP YOU! JOIN ME! LEAVE PHOBOS AND HIS CRUEL WAYS BEHIND YOU!
NOBODY WILL NOTICE US! RIGHT NOW, AS WE SPEAK, A GREAT NUMBER OF EARTH PEOPLE HAVE GATHERED. IF WE DISGUISE OURSELVES WELL ENOUGH, WE CAN BLEND IN WITH THEM— WE CAN ESCAPE!
THE PEOPLE OF MERIDIAN ARE REBELLING! I HAVE TO FIND THE OTHER GIRLS!
THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE . . . OUFF!
TUMP
SILENCE! THERE'S SOMEBODY HERE . . .

THEY HAVE HIDDEN THEMSELVES WELL. BUT I CAN STILL FEEL THEM!
OH, NO! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?
DORMOUSE!
WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?
GNIK!
STOP THAT CREATURE!
AAAAUGH!
YIKE!
COWARDS! ARE YOU REALLY AFRAID OF THIS PATHETIC CREATURE?
B—BUT IT WAS SO . . . HAIRY! HAVE YOU EVER SEEN ANYTHING SO HORRIBLE?
OH, NO! MY DORMOUSE ENTERED THE PORTAL! COME BACK . . . PLEASE . . .
. . . COME BACK!


GNIK!
WOW! WHO KNEW MY DORMOUSE COULD RUN SO FAST? MAYBE IF I CALL, IT'LL STOP...
...BUT HOW WOULD I DO THAT? I'VE HAD THE LITTLE GUY FOR SO LONG AND I STILL HAVEN'T GIVEN IT A NAME! WHEN, AND IF, I GET HOME, THE FIRST THING I'M GOING TO DO IS FIX THAT PROBLEM!
OKAY, THIS IS ENOUGH! STOP!
?
!
ARE YOU SPEAKING TO ME? IF YOU WANTED TO BE FUNNY, YOU PICKED THE WRONG PERSON TO PLAY WITH!
OOPS...
YOU LITTLE BEAST! IT SEEMS THAT GETTING INTO TROUBLE IS YOUR SPECIALITY...

ARE YOU FINISHED WITH THIS LITTLE GAME YET?
. . . GOTCHA! YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH DAMAGE FOR TODAY!
GNIK!
DO YOU REALIZE HOW MUCH TROUBLE YOU'VE GOTTEN US INTO? NEVER DO THAT AGAIN, UNDERSTAND? NEVER!
WE COULD HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED BY THE SOLDIERS OF MERIDIAN! WE COULD HAVE BEEN ARRESTED OR . . .
. . . OR . . .
. . . OH, MY GOODNESS!

WOW!
!

BLACK ROSES! THERE ARE . . . THOUSANDS!

BUT I DON'T THINK THESE ARE YOUR AVERAGE ROSES . . . I SENSE SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT THEM. THIS PLACE MUST BE PROTECTED BY SOME KIND OF MAGIC.

IT—IT PRICKED ME! I—I . . .
OH!

. . . I DON'T . . .
HINN? HNNN!
02

DO YOU THINK YOU COULD FINISH DRYING THE PLATES, DAD? I HAVE TO MAKE AN IMPORTANT PHONE CALL!
CERTAINLY, MY DEAR, BUT . . .
THANKS, DAD! I'LL BE BACK DOWN SOON!

I WONDER IF WILL MANAGED TO GET INTO THE STADIUM WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE?
I REALLY HOPE SHE'S OKAY!
BRIIP BRIIP
COME ON, WILL . . . PICK UP!
THE PERSON YOU ARE CALLING IS CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE. PLEASE TRY AGAIN LATER. THIS IS A RECORDING.
UNAVAILABLE?
WHERE ARE YOU, WILL?

"WILL . . ."
Will!
Will!
Will!
Will, take us with you!
Don't leave us!
LEAVE ME ALONE! I WANT TO GO!
LEAVE . . . ME . . . ALONE!
N—NO!

NOOoooooooooo!
WH—
WHAT . . .

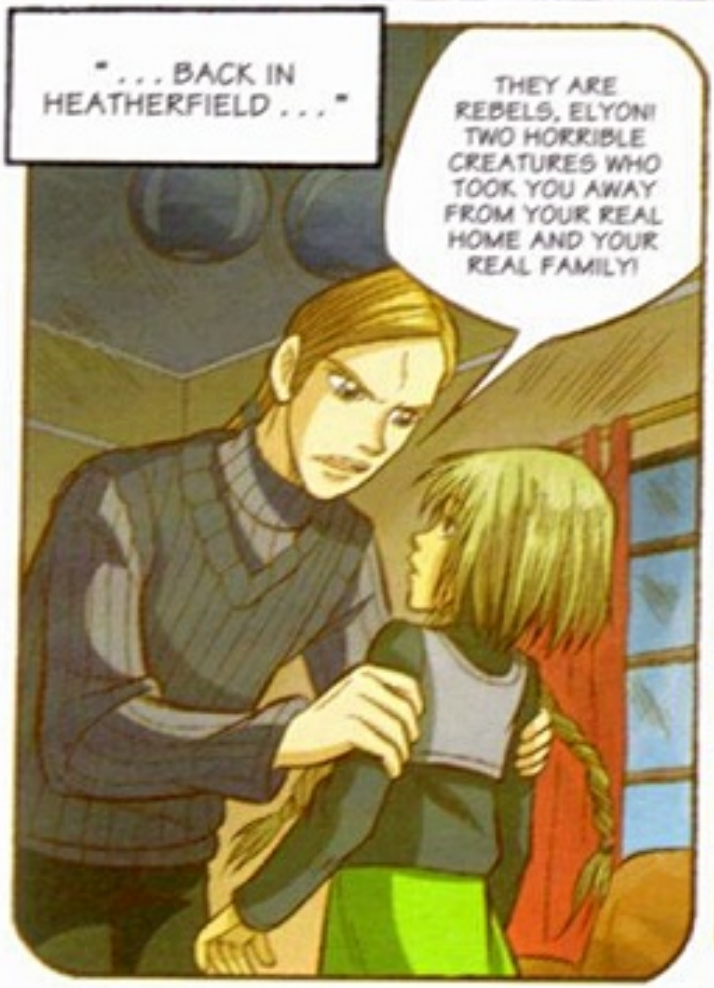
WHERE AM I? HOW DID I GET HERE?
OH, DORMOUSE! YOU DIDN'T LEAVE ME ALONE AFTER ALL!
UH-OH . . .
PLEASE, DON'T BE AFRAID OF ME. MY NAME IS DALTAR. I AM NOT HERE TO HARM YOU.

YOU . . . YOU . . . SURVIVED THE BLACK ROSES! THAT IS A MIRACLE!
THE THORNS THAT PRICKED YOU ARE USUALLY LETHAL. BUT NOT TO YOU! HOW ARE YOU CAPABLE OF AVOIDING THEIR POWER?
I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW . . .
MAYBE IT'S THIS . . . MAYBE THE HEART OF CANDRACAR PROTECTED ME!
THAT IS THE HEART OF CANDRACAR? DOES THAT MEAN THAT YOU ARE ONE OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE VEIL?
YES, I AM! BUT, FIRST—WHERE ARE WE? WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
THIS IS PHOBOS'S GARDEN! HAVE YOU COME TO CHALLENGE THE PRINCE OR TO HELP HIM? TELL ME.
DON'T WORRY, DALTAR! I'M NOT HERE TO HELP PHOBOS. YOU DON'T SOUND LIKE YOU LIKE HIM VERY MUCH . . .
LIKE HIM? THAT CREATURE REPELS ME, MORE THAN ANYTHING IN THE WORLD!

I'D TELL YOU WHY, BUT IT'S A LONG STORY...
I'M LISTENING.
LISTEN TO ME, PRINCESS ELYON! YOU COULD DO A LOT FOR THIS WORLD.
FIGHT BESIDE US FOR THE FREEDOM OF MERIDIAN!
THE FREEDOM OF MERIDIAN...
I SOMETIMES FEEL LIKE I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO DOESN'T KNOW THE TRUTH.
CALEB TELLS ME ONE THING...
CEDRIC ANOTHER...
WHOM DO I BELIEVE?

"IF ONLY THERE WERE SOMEONE ELSE TO ASK . . ."
THE FORTRESS OF MERIDIAN
THE PRISONERS YOU WISH TO SEE ARE IN THE CELL DOWN THE HALL!
CALL ME IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, PRINCESS ELYON!

ONCE UPON A TIME, THESE PEOPLE WERE MY MOTHER AND FATHER . . . IN SOME WAYS, THEY STILL ARE!
I GREW UP WITH THEM! I LOVED THEM . . . BUT SOMETHING CHANGED . . .


" . . . BACK IN HEATHERFIELD . . . "
THEY ARE REBELS, ELYON! TWO HORRIBLE CREATURES WHO TOOK YOU AWAY FROM YOUR REAL HOME AND YOUR REAL FAMILY!

THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, CEDRIC!
YOU WILL GET USED TO YOUR NEW LIFE, I PROMISE! NOW, LET'S GO.

PACK UP YOUR THINGS AND GET READY TO LEAVE!
?!

ELYON! WHAT'S GOING ON?
DAD! MOM!

DON'T CALL THEM THAT, ELYON . . .

. . . BECAUSE THIS IS WHO THEY REALLY ARE!
AHHHG!
KZZZAP
UHNNNG . . .
YOUR LITTLE GAME OF MAKE-BELIEVE IS OVER . . .
". . . LET'S GO BACK TO MERIDIAN! BACK HOME!"
ELYON! ARE . . . IS THAT YOU?
MY LITTLE GIRL! HOW ARE YOU?
COME CLOSER, HONEY! LET US SEE YOU . . .
OH, ELYON!
THEIR WORDS . . . AND THEIR GESTURES! THESE . . . THESE PEOPLE STILL LOVE ME!
I CAN'T STAY FOR LONG! I NEED YOU TO TELL ME THE TRUTH, TO CLEAR THINGS UP. I NEED SOME ANSWERS . . .
I ALREADY KNOW MY STORY AND THAT OF MERIDIAN! NOW I WANT TO HEAR THE TRUTH ABOUT PHOBOS! AT LEAST YOUR VERSION OF THE TRUTH.

PHOBOS IS EVIL, ELYON! THAT IS ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW . . . HE HAS TAKEN OVER AND CONTROLLED YOUR REIGN FOR ALL THESE YEARS!
WE TOOK YOU AWAY TO RESCUE YOU— NOT TO HURT YOU! YOUR BROTHER IS THE CRUEL ONE . . .
WE WANTED YOU TO GROW UP HAPPY, FAR AWAY FROM A WORLD WITH NO HOPE! PLEASE FORGIVE US! WE DID IT ALL FOR YOU!
PHOBOS MAY HAVE MADE SOME MISTAKES IN THE PAST, BUT HE'S CHANGED. HE WANTS TO GIVE ME THE CROWN! IF HE WERE AS BAD AS YOU SAY HE IS . . .
DON'T TRUST HIM, ELYON . . .
DON'T TRUST ANYBODY . . . JUST LISTEN TO YOUR HEART!
ALL RIGHT, PRISONERS!
IT'S DINNERTIME! GET READY!
LOWER YOUR VOICE, JARUS! PRINCESS ELYON IS HERE!
OH! FORGIVE ME, YOUR HIGHNESS!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT . . .
I WAS LEAVING ANYWAY.

FUTUREDOME
WE'RE HERE, DAD . . .
STOP THE CAR! THIS IS FINE.
YES, MA'AM!
THANKS FOR THE RIDE, DAD.
NOT A PROBLEM! HAVE FUN!
I'LL TRY! SEE YOU LATER!
PHEW! I REALLY NEED TO GET IN SHAPE . . . BUT RIGHT NOW I HAVE A BIGGER PROBLEM TO SOLVE . . .
. . . HOW TO GET INSIDE WITHOUT A TICKET! I DON'T KNOW HOW WILL DID IT.

. . . BUT A THICK CLOUD OF DUST USUALLY DOES THE TRICK.
HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON?
COUGH! COUGH! IT'S A CYCLONE!
COUGH! GAK! COUGH!
SORRY, GUYS, BUT I HAD TO DO IT. I PROMISE NOT TO DO IT AGAIN!
AND NOW I HAVE TO FIND THE OTHERS! THEY SHOULDN'T BE TOO FAR AWAY. KARMILLA IS ALREADY ONSTAGE . . .
. . . THERE THEY ARE!
HAY LIN! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FLU?
I'LL TELL YOU LATER! RIGHT NOW WE HAVE A MUCH BIGGER PROBLEM TO SOLVE. WE'VE GOT AN EMERGENCY SITUATION!
THAT'S BEGINNING TO SOUND WAY TOO NORMAL! WHAT HAPPENED?

A PORTAL HAS OPENED SOMEWHERE IN THE STADIUM! I TOLD WILL, AND SHE CAME HERE TO FIND IT BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HER SINCE.
WELL, WE HAVEN'T SEEN HER EITHER!

WE HAVE TO FIND HER! SHE COULD BE IN SERIOUS DANGER!

MEANWHILE, WILL LISTENS TO A TALE . . .
I AM THE CARETAKER OF THESE MARVELOUS CREATURES AND THIS EXTRAORDINARY GARDEN . . .

. . . MADE FOR THE SO-CALLED PLEASURE OF PRINCE PHOBOS!

AND ARE THE BLACK ROSES PART OF YOUR GARDEN AS WELL?
YES . . . BUT I'M NOT PROUD OF THEM!

THEY ARE BEAUTIFUL YET CRUEL FLOWERS . . . PITILESS FLOWERS THAT DECEIVE AND BETRAY . . .

"I HAD NO CHOICE . . ."

. . . WELL?
. . . NO, MASTER! I CAN'T DO THAT!
I'M JUST A SIMPLE GARDENER! TO PROTECT YOUR CASTLE YOU NEED STRONG WALLS— NOT FLOWERS!
MAYBE A LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT WILL MAKE YOU RECONSIDER . . .
YOUR WIFE AND YOUR DAUGHTER WILL MAKE BEAUTIFUL ROSES!
YOUR HIGHNESS, I BEG YOU . . .
OBSERVE, DALTAR . . .
I I I I
I AM
I I
. . . THIS IS WHAT I WANT!
THAT EVIL MAN HAD DESTROYED MY FAMILY, SO I CREATED ALL THOSE BLACK ROSES AND RAISED AN UNBREAK-ABLE BARRIER!

ANYONE WHO TOUCHES THE POISONOUS THORNS TURNS INTO ONE OF THE ROSES . . .
THESE FLOWERS . . . ARE ACTUALLY THE PEOPLE OF MERIDIAN! THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF DESPERATE SOULS WHO HAVE TRIED TO GET INSIDE THE CASTLE TO ASK PHOBOS FOR MERCY . . .
SO THESE ROSES . . . ARE ALIVE?
YES . . . AND IT IS MY JOB TO TAKE CARE OF THEM! SOMEWHERE INSIDE THESE THICK BUSHES IS MY FAMILY!
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHERE! SO MUCH TIME HAS PASSED SINCE PHOBOS TRANSFORMED THEM . . . AND SO MANY NEW ROSES HAVE BLOOMED.
COME ON, DALTAR . . .
BUT THINGS ARE GOING TO CHANGE SOON. I HEARD A RUMOR THAT SOMEONE IS HELPING PEOPLE TO ESCAPE FROM MERIDIAN.

OH, NO! I FORGOT! THE PORTAL AT THE STADIUM!
SORRY, DALTAR! I REALLY HAVE TO GO!
HERE, LET ME HELP MAKE THE PASSAGE EASIER FOR YOU.
WOOOOOSH
GOOD LUCK, WILL! I HOPE WE MEET AGAIN SOON!
MEANWHILE, IN MERIDIAN . . .
SO, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? I CAN'T KEEP THIS PORTAL OPEN MUCH LONGER!
WE ARE NERVOUS, RAVEN . . .
. . . THEY ARE NERVOUS BECAUSE THEY DON'T TRUST YOU, STRANGER! WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU HERE?
YOU . . .
. . . YOU'RE CALEB! AND YOU MUST BE VATHEK! I'VE HEARD TALK OF YOU! THE FAMOUS REBELS . . .
WHEREAS WE, ON THE OTHER HAND, KNOW NOTHING ABOUT YOU EXCEPT YOUR NAME.

HE'S A LEADER IN SOME REGIONS OF MERIDIAN!
HE'S ALSO A THOUGHTLESS PERSON WHO DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HE IS DOING. THE WORLD BEYOND THAT PORTAL IS NOT READY TO WELCOME THE PEOPLE OF MERIDIAN!
THE VEIL WILL COLLAPSE BENEATH THE PRESSURE OF SUCH A LARGE CROWD . . .
. . . AND IF THAT HAPPENS, THE CONSEQUENCES FOR BOTH WORLDS WILL BE CATASTROPHIC!
LIES! NONSENSE! YOU ARE AFRAID THAT THESE PEOPLE WILL FOLLOW ME INSTEAD OF YOU!
HMMM! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
YOU ARE NOT TO BE TRUSTED!
UH-OH! THIS DOESN'T LOOK GOOD! MAYBE I SHOULDN'T REVEAL MYSELF QUITE YET . . .
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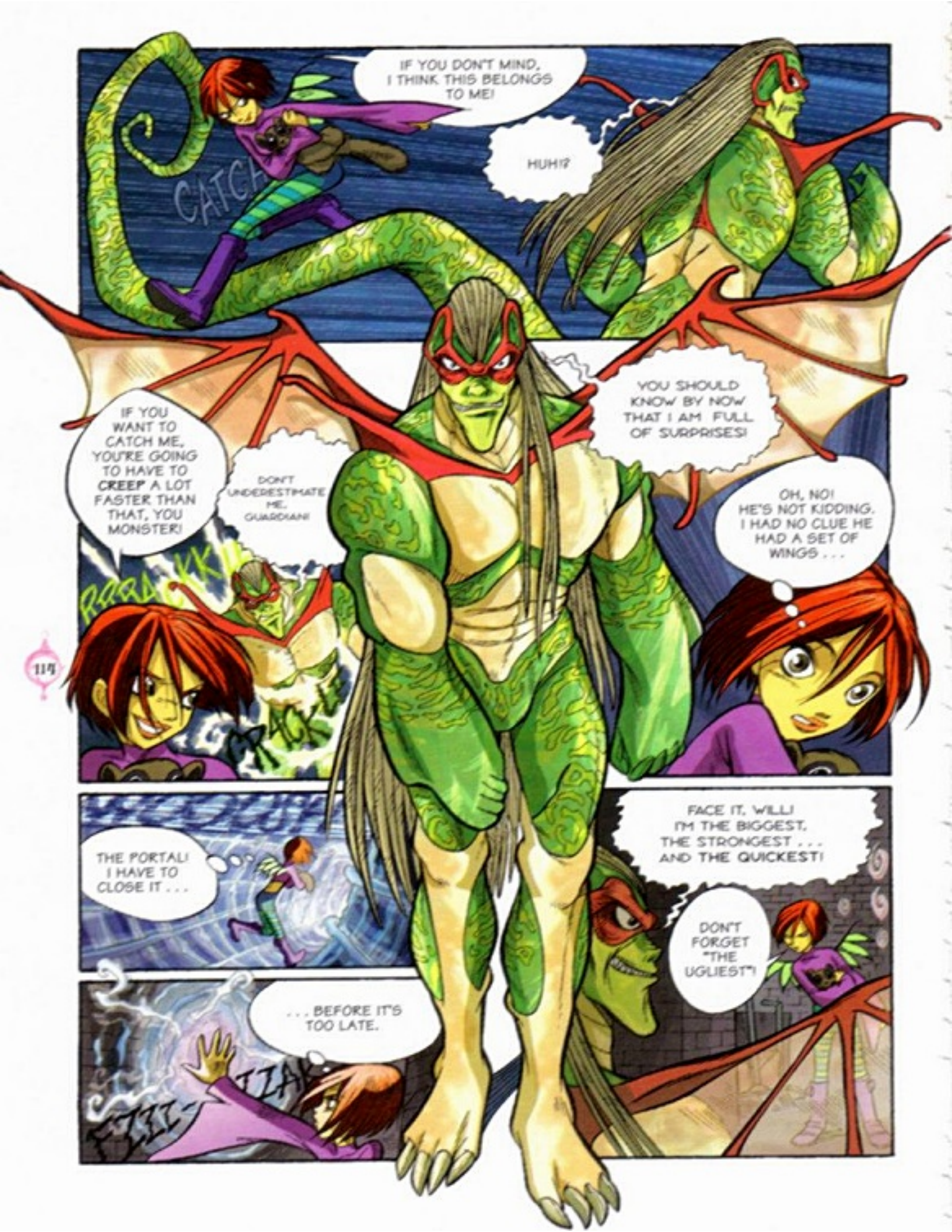
COME ON, PEOPLE OF MERIDIAN! FOLLOW ME!
STAY AWAY FROM BE, YOU BIG BEAST!
RAAAARRGH!
THAT VOICE . . . THIS POWER . . . ! . . . I KNOW YOU!

IT'S LORD CEDRIC!
WHAT!
IT'S A TRAP!

HOW VERY CLEVER OF YOU, VATHEK! WE WERE A GOOD TEAM ONCE . . .
GET OUT OF HERE! GO HOME!
QUICK! QUICK!
AHHHHH! EEEEK!
. . . BUT ALL GOOD THINGS MUST COME TO AN END!
AAARGH!

VATHEK!
GOOD-BYE, OLD FRIEND!
GASP!
HUH?
SORRY FOR THE INTERRUPTION. DID I COME AT A BAD TIME?
WILL! WH—WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO TALK! WE HAVE TO GET THESE PEOPLE AWAY FROM HERE BEFORE SOMEONE GETS HURT!
HOW VERY TOUCHING . . .
. . . BUT MAYBE YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT YOURSELF FIRST, MY YOUNG GUARDIAN!
KZZZAKZZZ
GASP!
UNNNGH!
PRINCE PHOBOS WILL BE PROUD OF ME! NOT ONLY WILL I DEFEAT THE REBEL LEADERS, I WILL GAIN POSSESSION OF THE HEART OF CANDRACAR! NOT BAD FOR A DAY'S WORK.
YEOOOW!
YOU!
GLIP!
GET YOURSELF TO SAFETY! I'LL DISTRACT HIM AND GET HIM TO FOLLOW ME . . .
NO, WILL! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!


IF YOU DON'T MIND, I THINK THIS BELONGS TO ME!
HUH!?
CATCH
IF YOU WANT TO CATCH ME, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO CREEP A LOT FASTER THAN THAT, YOU MONSTER!
DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ME, GUARDIAN!
YOU SHOULD KNOW BY NOW THAT I AM FULL OF SURPRISES!
OH, NO! HE'S NOT KIDDING. I HAD NO CLUE HE HAD A SET OF WINGS . . .
GRACK
THE PORTAL! I HAVE TO CLOSE IT . . .
FACE IT, WILL! I'M THE BIGGEST, THE STRONGEST . . . AND THE QUICKEST!
DON'T FORGET "THE UGLIEST"!
. . . BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.
FZZZ-
ZIAF

THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR HUMOR!
AAAAH!
YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS HAVE NOTHING! WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE THINGS UP TO THE ADULTS?
IN THE NAME OF PHOBOS . . . GIVE ME THE HEART OF CANDRACAR, GUARDIAN!
I . . . NNNGH . . . I . . .
GIVE IT TO ME NOW!
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE TO SAY TO THAT, CEDRIC?
INSIDE THE STADIUM
WE'RE NEVER GOING TO FIND HER! IT'S LIKE LOOKING FOR A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK! THIS PLACE IS ENORMOUS, AND SHE COULD BE ANYWHERE . . .
. . . EVEN THOUGH SOMETHING TELLS ME I SHOULD LOOK OVER THERE!

IT'S WILL! AND CEDRIC!
B—BUT . . . LOOK AT THE CROWD!
!
YEEEAH!
FANTASTIC!
WOWWWWW!
THEY'RE CLAPPING! THEY THINK THAT THIS IS SOME KIND OF SPECIAL-EFFECTS SHOW!
WHEREAS, ON THE CONTRARY, EVERYTHING IS TERRIBLY REAL! COME ON! LET'S GO AND HELP OUR FRIEND!
KEEP PLAYING! KEEP PLAYING!
I HOPE THOSE LITTLE WINGS OF YOURS CAN HOLD YOU, WILL . . . BECAUSE IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN FROM HERE INTO THAT CROWD!
GASP!
FZZZZAK
FZZZZAK
FZZZZAK
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OH, YOU'RE WRONG, CEDRIC. I UNDERSTAND ONE THING PERFECTLY . . .
STUPID HUMANS! THEY NEVER UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENS AROUND THEM!
LEAVE SOME FUN FOR US, TOO, WILL!
. . . AND I KNOW THAT YOU'RE IN BIG TROUBLE NOW!
!
ALL TOGETHER . . .
. . . NOW!
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YES! DID WE COMPLETELY DESTROY HIM?
I DON'T THINK SO, HAY LIN! LOOK OVER THERE!
HE'S GETTING AWAY! LET'S FOLLOW HIM!
NO, TARANEE . . .
IT'S TOO RISKY TO FIGHT HERE! AND UNFORTUNATELY, I AM SURE WE'LL HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE TO FIGHT HIM AGAIN ALL TOO SOON . . .
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". . . THIS FIGHT SEEMS DESTINED NEVER TO END."
WELL, NOW, YOUNG LADIES, DON'T BE OFFENDED—BUT YOU HAVE SOME MEAN EXPRESSIONS ON YOUR FACES!
DID KARMILLA WEAR YOU OUT?
YOU COULD SAY THAT! WE'RE BEAT!
I'LL GET THE CAR AND COME PICK YOU UP. DO YOU NEED A RIDE HOME, WILL?
NO, THANKS, MR. LAIR! I HAVE MY BIKE!

ARE YOU REALLY SURE YOU DON'T WANT A RIDE? WE COULD PUT YOUR BIKE IN THE TRUNK.
NO, THANKS, IRMA . . . REALLY, I'M FINE!
YOU HEARD SOME PRETTY AWFUL STORIES TODAY, WILL! THE BLACK ROSES . . . DALTAR AND HIS FAMILY . . .
. . . AND THEN YOU HAD TO DEAL WITH THE REBEL FORCES AND CEDRIC! BAD THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN MERIDIAN.
THINGS ARE CHANGING THERE . . . AND I'M NOT EXACTLY SURE WHAT OUR ROLE IS GOING TO BE.
BUT, WILL, YOU KNOW WHAT OUR ROLE IS . . . WE ARE THE GUARDIANS OF THE VEIL!
WHICH IS WHY IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO REMAIN NEAR THE PORTALS AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS.
WE'RE AWARE OF THE PROBLEM. THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN DEFEND AN INVISIBLE BARRIER WITHOUT DISRUPTING THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE ON THE OTHER SIDE!
I'M WITH YOU! IF THE PEOPLE OF MERIDIAN WANT TO INVADE OUR WORLD, IT IS NOT OUT OF ANGER OR EVIL . . .
. . . BUT OUT OF DESPERATION! THOSE PEOPLE WANT TO ESCAPE FROM FEAR AND HUNGER!
AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHY WE WILL HELP THEM. I'M WITH YOU, TOO, WILL.

HEY! I DON'T WANT TO BE THE ODD GIRL OUT! I'M IN, TOO!
SO, GET OVER HERE.
NOBODY WILL EVER DIVIDE US!
NOBODY . . .
CLICK
HELLO.
HELLO.
AHEM . . . I'M A LITTLE LATE!
I NOTICED. YOU HAD A NICE, LONG WALK, HUH?

THIS LITTLE GUY DROVE ME CRAZY TODAY! IT RAN AWAY, AND I HAD TO RUN AFTER IT ALL AFTERNOON! YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN HOW FAST IT RAN.
I CAN IMAGINE. DINNER WILL BE READY IN TEN MINUTES.
DON'T... DON'T YOU WANT TO HEAR ABOUT MY DAY?
IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY, WE HAD A FIGHT EARLIER. DID WE MAKE UP AND DID I FORGET ABOUT IT?
WHERE WERE YOU ALL AFTERNOON— BESIDES CHASING YOUR DORMOUSE?
I...I...
...I'M GOING TO MY ROOM! AND DON'T BOTHER CALLING ME FOR DINNER... I'M NOT HUNGRY!
WILL!
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WHAT'S HAPPENED TO US, WILL? WE USED TO BE FRIENDS! BUT SINCE WE MOVED TO HEATHERFIELD, EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED...
I WONDER IF LEAVING HERE MIGHT CHANGE THINGS— MIGHT MAKE THEM BETTER?